-- 22. A method of treating a contact surface of a metal electrical contact, comprising;

electroplating a barrier layer over the contact surface;

selecting the barrier layer from the group including cobalt, cobalt-nickel alloys, cobalt-tungsten alloys, cobalt-nickel-tungsten alloys, and rhodium; and forming the thickness of the barrier layer in the range of from about

0.00001 inch to about 0.0001 inch.

- 23. The method of claim 22, including etching the contact surface with a light acid before the electroplating step.
- 24. The method of claim 23, including activating the contact surface before the electroplating step.
- 25. The method of claim 22, wherein the barrier layer is electroplated by adjusting a plating current density in the range of from about 10 to about 150 amperes per square foot.
- 26. The method of claim 25, wherein the electroplating step includes preparing a plating bath solution having at least one of cobalt sulphamate, cobalt sulfate, and cobalt chloride.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the tungsten salt is sodium tungstate.

with a tungsten salt, an organic acid, and ammonium oxide.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein the organic acid is citric acid.

- 30. The method of claim 25, including preparing the plating bath solution with at least one of nickel sulfamate, nickel sulfate, nickel chloride and organic additives.
- 31. The method of claim 22, including providing the metal electrical contact in the form of a copper contact member.
- 32. The method of claim 22, comprising applying an outer layer over and in contact with the barrier layer.
- 33. The method of claim 32, including selecting the outer layer from the group including tin, gold, palladium, platinum, silver, and combinations thereof.
- 34. The method of claim 22, including applying a strike layer on said contact surface before electroplating the barrier layer.